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# **.SERVICE NEWS**

**PUBLISHED BY THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

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The NEWS is intended to inform staff members of developments within the Service and is not for distribution to others.

Benton, Miss Mildred

December 13, 1938

## A WORD OF GREETING FROM THE CHIEF

May I take this opportunity to extend on behalf of every member of our official family, a hearty welcome to the many newcomers to the Soil Conservation Service? In the past I have had many occasions to be grateful for the sympathetic cooperation of BAE's strong Divisions of Project Organization, Land Acquisition and Land Development in the shaping of the program of our young bureau. We have been close co-workers within the Department of Agriculture, and henceforth our relationships will be even closer and our aims will be merged.

Fresh viewpoints and healthy new blood are good for an organization. We shall look with confidence to the new corps, for ideas and abilities that will help us to discharge the larger assignment. The working partnerships that formerly existed in other bureaus will be immensely useful to the augmented working partnership within the Soil Conservation Service.

I can promise that intra-bureau cooperation will be two-way in nature. Having the physical land-use tools and workers and objectives under a single roof will make for efficiency and add zest to the job.

H. H. BENNETT.

## STANDING COMMITTEES APPOINTED

In order that a thorough study may be made of factors involved in any changes of policy and procedure necessitated by the delegation of new duties to the Soil Conservation Service, the Chief has appointed five standing committees. These committees will report to him their findings in their respective fields, together with their recommendations for Service realignment, and are as follows:

1. The Committee on Surveys and Project Planning, headed by A. L. Patrick, Chief of the Watershed and Conservation Surveys Division, will cooperate with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics on a coordinated planning program.

2. The Organization Committee, of which Administration Chief F. J. Hopkins is chairman, will suggest adjustments in Service structure and functions.

3. The Committee on Land Acquisition and Land Management Policies, under E. J. Utz, now acting as Assistant to the Chief in charge of the new land program, will consider the needs of that program.

4. The Committee on General Objectives and Policies of the Service will be headed by J. Phil Campbell, Chief of the Cooperative Relations and Planning Division, and will recommend necessary revisions of policy arising from new Service assignments.

5. The Inventory Committee, also under Mr. Utz, will study existing land utilization projects with a view to fitting them into the SCS program.

The 40 members of the five committees represent the Washington SCS staff, the Regional Conservators' offices, and the three Divisions of the BAE taken over by the Service in October.

#### PERSONNEL CHANGES

G. K. Zimmerman, in charge of press and radio, Section of Information, was on November 1 detailed temporarily to duties as Assistant to the Chief of the Service.

Until Mr. Zimmerman returns to his regular duties, W. L. Southworth and M. M. Tozier of the Information office will handle matters connected with press work and with radio work respectively.

H. L. Buckardt, regional training officer in the SCS's Region 5, has been appointed chief training officer of the Section of Personnel Management and Training of the Administration Division.

Mr. Buckardt, an agronomist, received his Doctor's degree at the University of Illinois in 1932; and was connected with the SCS as agronomist and as coordinator with the Extension Service before he took charge of the personnel training program in Region 5.



### AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERS MEET

T. B. Chambers, Head of the Engineering Section, presided over a meeting of the Soil and Water Conservation Division of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers at their fall session in Chicago last week.

The following papers were read by engineers connected with the Soil Conservation Service:

"Aims and Objectives of the Small Water Facilities Program" -- W. W. McLaughlin.

"The Engineering Planning and Construction of Small Water Facilities" -- E. R. Kinnear.

"Planning Farm Drainage Systems by Watersheds" -- J. J. Coyle.

"Terrace Outlet Channel Studies" -- H. L. Cook.

"Hydrologic Studies at the Waco (Texas) Experiment Station" -- R. W. Baird.

"Reservoirs and Ponds -- Legal Investigations and Compliance with State Rights" -- Frank Kimball and J. S. Glass.

"Investigations for Plans, Designs, and Construction of Reservoirs and Ponds" -- J. W. Jourdan and C. A. Haskins.

Several members of the SCS Washington and field personnel attended the meeting.

### CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

G. C. Dobson, Acting Head, Sedimentation Studies, recently visited the laboratory at Pasadena, Calif., which is maintained by the Division of Research in cooperation with the California Institute of Technology. In addition to inspecting the laboratory and conferring with Dr. Robert T. Knapp, Associate Professor at the Institute and a Service cooperator, Vito A. Vanoni, Project Leader, and members of the staff regarding the problems being studied there, Mr. Dobson took advantage of the opportunity to visit some of the flood-control works of the Los Angeles Flood Control District and to obtain first-hand information in the field on one of the most interesting and difficult flood-control and debris problems of the United States.

A visit to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at La Jolla, Calif., made possible an enlightening discussion with members of the staff of

that institution on the relationship between density underflows in reservoirs to certain stratified flows in oceans.

#### DR. PIETERS RETIRES

On December 1, Adrian J. Pieters, Principal Agronomist in the Section of Agronomy and Range Management, retired from Government service, after his second executive extension had expired.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Dr. Pieters did graduate work at Cornell University and at the University of Heidelberg, and received his doctorate from Michigan in 1915. Except for a 9-year interval spent in study, college teaching, and commercial seed-growing, he has been with the Department of Agriculture since 1895.

While making a study of the causes of clover failure for the Department, Dr. Pieters became convinced that agronomists should make an effort to discover crops which would grow in the sour, worn soils of the South with a minimum of treatment and expense. In 1919, therefore, he began a systematic study of acid-tolerant plants.

In plants grown at Arlington Farms, the Department's trial grounds at Rosslyn, Va., from seed of a new lespedeza brought from Korea, Dr. Pieters realized that he had found a crop suited to southern soils. Accordingly, the seed was distributed to State experiment stations and to private cooperators; and this plant is now used for hay, pasture, soil improvement, and erosion control as far west as Kansas and as far north as the lower Michigan line.

In 1923, Dr. Pieters added a perennial (Lespedeza sericea) which thrived under adverse growing conditions to the list of annual lespedezas the use of which he was stimulating by his writings and by other means. The current popularity of lespedeza as a forage crop is attested by the fact that in 1938 some 17,000,000 pounds of seed were harvested -- more than the combined seed crops of alfalfa, red clover, alsike clover, and timothy.

Dr. Pieters has written numerous bulletins, articles, and pamphlets on lespedeza, and in 1934 published "The Little Book of Lespedeza." He has prepared two digests of pasture literature; and his "Green Manuring; Principles and Practice" presents the results of his researches in the field of soil improvement. As an agronomist with the Soil Conservation Service, he has studied the use of the lespedezas in the soil conservation program, and is the author of several leaflets and articles on this subject, in addition to two bulletins which will appear in 1939.

The American Society of Agronomists has made Dr. Pieters one of its fellows, a distinction conferred each year upon two or three outstanding



scientists in the agronomic field. Throughout the South, Chambers of Commerce and business men's clubs have honored him for his services to farmers in their efforts to increase the productive capacity of their soils and to improve their economic condition.

#### AGRONOMISTS MEETING

The first meeting of the Service's regional agronomists and range examiners was held in Washington November 9-15.

The five-day session, attended by the Washington and field staffs of the Section of Agronomy and Range Management, and by Washington representatives of the Woodland, Wildlife, Nurseries, and other related Sections, was opened by the Chief, who discussed agronomy's place in the soil conservation program.

C. B. Manifold, Chief of the Operations Division, and J. S. Barnes, N. R. Bear, W. F. Peel, and F. G. Renner of his staff, addressed the first day's meeting on topics relating to Service planning, policy, and procedure as they apply to the work of the Agronomy Section. E. J. Utz, Assistant to the Chief in charge of the land program, spoke on farm and ranch agreements and the duties of agronomist and examiner in formulating them and carrying them out. Agronomy Head C. R. Enlow presided.

The remaining sessions, under the chairmanship of E. A. Hodson, R. H. Morrish, G. F. Brown, W. T. White, and J. L. Boatman, agronomists of Regions 4, 3, 1, 11, and 5, respectively, heard papers by field representatives of the section on crop rotations, field practices, machinery, cover crops, pasture programs, range surveys, nursery work, and allied subjects.

One important result of the meeting was the formation of a permanent Orchards Committee, headed by Region 1 Agronomist G. F. Brown, and composed of Regional Agronomists C. B. Ahlson (Region 10), R. Y. Bailey (Region 2), R. H. Morrish (Region 3), and S. L. Sloan, from the Region 11 office.

The Committee was organized as a result of studies of Region 10 irrigated orchards made by Mr. Ahlson, who discovered that more and better fruit was being received at California canning factories from orchards kept under permanent cover than from those under cultivation.

Papers read at the meeting and committee reports are being mimeographed, and may be obtained from Mr. Enlow's office.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

". . . soil conservation, if properly managed, can mean wildlife conservation," W. R. Van Dersal observes in the introduction to "Native Woody Plants of the United States, Their Erosion-Control and Wildlife Values," just published by the USDA as Miscellaneous Publication No. 303.

Dr. Van Dersal, biologist of the Section of Wildlife Management of the SCS, presents an indexed list of woody plants -- trees, shrubs, and vines -- growing in the U. S., giving all available data relative to the use of each in the conservation of soil and wildlife.

Both the scientific and vernacular names of a species are given; together with its natural range (by means of figures referring to a map which classifies the country by regions); its climatic and soil requirements; its fruit and the season during which it is available; records of its use by wildlife; and a brief description of its growth and propagation habits.

The 362-page volume includes two large maps showing U. S. soil and climatic regions in their relation to plant-growth regions, and a number of illustrative plates.

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G. K. Rule, of the Information Section, and E. M. Rowalt, who left that Section last spring to serve with the Office of Land Use Coordination, are authors of the two latest Farmers' Bulletins to appear in the SCS series covering the major agricultural regions of the United States.

No. 1810, "Soil Defense in the Northeast," by Mr. Rule, deals with the group of States east of the Ohio Corn Belt and north of Virginia. Mr. Rowalt's bulletin, "Soil Defense in the South," (No. 1809), covers the Cotton Belt west of the Georgia-Alabama line.

Both writers discuss erosion and its causes in their respective sections of the country, and describe soil conservation practices employed on farms within SCS project and camp areas. Mr. Rule takes up the various types of farming common to the Northeast and conservation measures particularly applicable to each; and Mr. Rowalt divides his Cotton Belt into a number of erosion-problem areas calling for individual variations of treatment.

Illustrations, maps, diagrams, and tables appear in both bulletins.



### ACCIDENT

An automobile mechanic stationed at one of the Service's CCC camps was fatally injured last summer when his truck left the road and crashed into a drainage ditch after he had fallen asleep at the wheel.

The circumstances of this accident as they have reached SCS authorities are as follows:

The mechanic involved and a companion were taking two trucks over the road from one SCS project to another located several hundred miles away. Although cautioned by the superintendent of the first project to make the trip by easy stages and to avoid driving long hours at a stretch, the man who was killed drove all night in order to do some repair work on equipment early next morning so that it might be used during the day.

It is not the desire of the Soil Conservation Service that its employees, in the pursuit of their duties, arrive at a state of physical and mental fatigue calculated to endanger their lives. Although this man's intention was commendable, his mistaken zeal led to his death, to the loss of his services to the Government, to damage to Government equipment -- and the work he was so eager to do was still not accomplished.

### SCANTIC RIVER WATERSHED STUDIES

A meeting of State and Federal workers in the Scantic River Watershed held at Rockville, Conn., last month, heard W. J. Roth, Economic Research Section Head, discuss cooperative research in that demonstration area.

It was felt by those attending that the economic studies underway, to date limited by budgetary considerations, should be continued until some adequate conclusions could be reached with regard to the "costs and benefits" of the soil and water conservation program recommended for this project.

At present, the area is being re-surveyed to determine the amount of damage caused by the September hurricane and floods, which destroyed a share of the tobacco crop; and to discover the extent to which farmers plan to grow tobacco next year. The information secured will be made available to the AAA, in accordance with the Department's policy of cooperation with USDA Bureaus and other Federal agencies in the field.

### RADIO PROGRAM ON CONSERVATION PLANNED

The Department of the Interior is planning to produce a series of 26 radio programs on the subject of conservation entitled "What Price

America." The program will report in dramatized form the history of conservation in terms of the discovery, exploitation, and use of America's resources. The story will begin with the settlements in 1620 and continue through 1939.

It is expected to begin the program some time in January, 1939, but definite dates and stations have not yet been determined.

#### RADIO NOTES

The Chief, on November 23, discussed soil conservation in the southern Piedmont with Ralph Fulghum of the Federal Extension Service and Joe B. Douthit, a farmer coöperator of Anderson, S. C., over the NBC network. Wallace Kadderly, Chief of the USDA Radio Service, acted as interlocutor.

John Drier, of the Service's lately acquired Land Utilization Division, spoke on the land use program on December 6 over the National Farm and Home Hour broadcast.

#### SOIL CONSERVATION BIBLIOGRAPHY

A 650-page volume of references compiled by S. H. Gaines, formerly of the SCS Section of Information, has just been issued as Miscellaneous Publication No. 312, USDA, under the title, "Bibliography on Soil Erosion and Soil and Water Conservation."

The book contains 4,388 individual references, each followed by an abstract giving the gist of the material covered by the book, pamphlet, or article listed. Items are grouped according to subject matter, and there are two indexes: one a grouping by geographical regions, the other by authors.

A committee composed of Mildred C. Benton, SCS librarian; M. H. Cohee and E. H. Reed of the Erosion Control Practices Section; H. E. Middleton, of the Section of Experiment Stations; and S. D. Frissell, the Service's technical editor, passed upon the merit of material considered for inclusion in the bibliography.

No reference is made to literature on erosion in foreign languages (already contained in the U. S. Geological Survey's Water Supply Paper No. 797, "Selected Bibliography on Erosion and Silt Movement"), and few items postdate August, 1937.

#### "AMERICAN MEN OF SCIENCE"

The sixth edition (1938) of "American Men of Science" has recently been received in the Service library. In this biographical directory are



sketches of more than 28,000 men of science, including about 80 members of the Soil Conservation Service. Since it is frequently consulted for verification of names, addresses, etc., the book is not available for loan; but information given under the individual entries will gladly be quoted over the telephone upon application to the Library.

#### DR. BRANDT'S CLASS

The class in Design of Experiments conducted by A. E. Brandt, statistical analyst of the Research Division, held its first meeting in the South Building on November 22.

This class will consist of two weekly lectures and an "In-Service" seminar which, because of the size of the enrollment (63) will be split into two sections. Attended by members of several Bureaus of the Department, it will not coincide with the regular term of the Graduate School, to accomodate those who must be in the field during the planting, growing, and harvesting seasons.

#### PENNSYLVANIA MEETING

"Soils and Civilization" was the subject of a talk made by the Chief on December 3 before a Service Area Institute at the California, Pa., State Teachers' College.

The Institute was attended by students at the college and by teachers, superintendents, supervisors, county agents, Farm Bureau personnel, and farmers from the group of southwestern counties included in the area.

Dr. George E. Harding, head of the Geography Department, has for years taught conservation of natural resources; and more recently soil conservation has been stressed in college and extension classes and in local schools through his efforts and those of Dr. Thomas Gilland, director of the Training School. President Robert M. Steele's interest in the subject is responsible for the very fine collection of reference material on soil conservation in the college library.

#### REGION 2 BIOLOGISTS

E. G. Holt, Head of the Section of Wildlife Management, will attend on December 10 a gathering of Region 2 biologists at Spartanburg, S. C., called by Verne Davison, in charge of wildlife activities in the Southeast.

Those present will discuss, among other things, the utilization of field borders for wildlife plantings, gully control by means of woody plants which serve as shelter and food for animals and birds, and the results



of field trials conducted with a view to discovering herbaceous plants having value both for erosion control and for wildlife preservation.

#### NOTES

W. J. Roth, Head of the Economics of Soil Conservation Section, conferred last month in Raleigh, N. C., with G. W. Forster, agricultural economist at the experiment station, and S. W. Atkins, the Section's representative there, on manuscripts descriptive of economic research in Franklin County's Franklinton area. M. T. Matthews, rural sociologist at the station, has also been working on social problems in this demonstration area, and has his conclusions ready for early publication.

With E. L. Sauer, of the Economic Research staff at Urbana, Ill., Dr. Roth later in the month attended a farm management and accounting conference at Ottawa, where accounting records kept over a period of years for a group of Illinois farms were examined and studied. Following the meeting, he and Mr. Sauer visited project areas in the State, and went over cooperative economic research developments with the personnel at Urbana.

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Before the Conservation Section of the Texas Academy of Science, meeting at Waco on November 11, G. R. Stewart, Assistant to the Chief of the Research Division, read a paper on "Research Results in Soil Conservation."

Dr. Stewart made an extended trip through Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas prior to the Waco meeting, visiting the Research project in which the Kansas experiment station cooperates, several Operations projects, and some of the work of the Bureau of Plant Industry. En route to Washington, he inspected projects in Louisiana and Arkansas, including the 28,000-acre Western Arkansas Recreation and Pasture Improvement project near Fayetteville developed under the Resettlement Administration which is being transferred to the SCS.

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A. E. Brandt, the Research Division's statistical analyst, went with W. J. Roth, Economics Section Head, to Winona, Minn., in November to attend a meeting called to discuss cooperative economic research in the Corn Belt. In attendance were Economics representatives, experiment station personnel, and men from the Operations Division field staffs of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nebraska.

Dr. Brandt subsequently conferred with Director H. C. Hanson of the Experiment Station at Fargo, N. D., and his assistants on results of the station's pasture, tillage, and rotation experiments; and with Agricultural Economist A. C. Bunce at Ames, Iowa, with regard to erosion surveys he is making in the State.

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E. R. Kinnear, of the Section of Flood Control Surveys, met in Denver, Colo., last week, with representatives of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Forest Service, and the SCS to discuss the flood control survey program. After the conference, Mr. Kinnear left to inspect three flood control projects: Fountain Creek in Region 6, Washita in Region 7, and St. Francis in Region 5, and expects to return to Washington about the middle of the month.

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Neil W. Johnson, of the Farm Management and Costs Division, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, has been named liaison officer in charge of coordinating the work of his Division with that of the Economic Research Section of the SCS. A Memorandum of Understanding already exists between the two groups, and they have been functioning cooperatively in this field for some time.

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To discuss evaluation surveys and field tests, and to assist field personnel in the development of working plans for studies being made in Region 2, R. E. Uhland, liaison officer for the Research and Operations Divisions, and W. F. Peel, of the Operations staff, spent several days last week at the regional office at Spartanburg, S. C., the experiment station at Athens, Ga., and at project offices throughout the area.

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M. L. Nichols, Acting Chief of the Research Division, and C. E. Ramser, Head of the Section of Watershed and Hydrologic Studies, spent several days in November looking over the work underway at the Columbus and Dayton, Ohio, State experiment stations, and visiting the Region 3 office at Dayton.

Later in the month, both men attended the meeting of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers at Chicago.

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R. C. Clifford, agricultural engineer stationed at Farmington, N. M., was in Washington the latter part of November en route to Puerto Rico, where he will be in charge of the engineering work on the Service project at Mayaguez.

He will replace Agricultural Engineer V. W. Thalmann, who goes to Amarillo, Tex., to take charge of SCS equipment in Region 6.

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Assistant Chief D. S. Myer has just returned from a fortnight's inspection tour of Regions 6 and 8 in company with H. A. Tolley, Chief

of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and F. F. Elliott, Director of the Division of Program Planning of the AAA.

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T. L. Gaston, Head of the Cooperative Planning Section, was in Lincoln, Neb., last week, attending a water facilities conference.

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J. H. Stallings, of Flood Control Surveys, made an inspection tour of the Muskingum, Ohio, flood control project last week.

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### REQUEST

The office of the Service periodical, "Soil Conservation," finds itself unable to supply numerous requests for back numbers of the magazine. Notably missing are copies of the following issues:

Volume I	--	all issues
Volume II	--	September, December, 1936
Volume III	--	March, April, May, 1938.

Possessors of extra copies of these issues will confer a favor upon the editor by mailing them to him for redistribution where needed.

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